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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/13/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GG](#) [RU](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKEY ADVOCATES PATIENCE ON CIS PEACEKEEPERS IN
ABKHAZIA

REF: A. TBILISI 970
[1](#)B. ANKARA 1062

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Kelly Degnan, reasons 1.4 b,
d

[1](#)1. (C) The Turkish MFA has not yet been briefed by Georgia on any decision to call for the replacement of Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia (ref A), but is aware of the proposal from contacts in other capitals, according to MFA South Caucasus Head of Department Firat Sunel. Sunel believes the proposal could be released any day. For Turkey, he said, it is not a question of support for Georgia, which is unequivocal. But the request would be provocative and support from Georgia's "Friends" for a new policing structure and negotiating format is unclear to Turkey. Speaking personally, he asked how a country can unilaterally amend the terms of a peacekeeping operation mandated by the United Nations. Turkey is urging patience and appreciated greatly DAS Bryza's efforts to bring Abkhazia back to the table. The Abkhaz, he said, have taken the message and are more comfortable with U.S. engagement. The Turks do not sense any particular progress having emerged from Solana's June 5 visit to Georgia and Abkhazia.

[1](#)2. (C) Sunel emphasized that no official contacts took place between the GOT and Abkhaz "FM" Shamba during his June 4 visit to Ankara (ref B); he traveled here as a Russian citizen by invitation from a private Turkish organization. The MFA sent a second secretary to the "Abkhaz Day" reception (the Georgians apparently did not notice), which a few other parliamentary and former government notables attended, but the Georgians were satisfied with the overall low level of GOT involvement. He clarified that the GOG had tried to persuade Turkey to turn off this visit, as they had for previously planned visits by Abkhaz "President" Bagapsh, but did not complain too loudly when it occurred.

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